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## COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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LANCE M. LARSON  
Director of Legislative Affairs

April 20, 2009

The Honorable Tony Strickland  
California State Senate  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **SB 744 (Strickland)** - As Introduced 2/24/09 -**OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Senator Strickland:

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors regrets that it must oppose SB 744 unless amended to remove all mention of Public Health Laboratories.

As you know, SB 744 modifies the clinical laboratory licensing fee structure, facilitates the use of private accrediting organizations to inspect clinical laboratories, requires public health laboratories to pay laboratory and personnel licensing fees, and increases phlebotomy technician licensing fees.

There are currently 38 public health laboratories located in California that are administered locally by city or county public health departments. Local public health laboratories provide services relating to the examination of specimens from suspected cases of infectious and environmental diseases, including specimens from humans, milk, water, food, vectors, and the environment. While public health laboratories may conduct patient diagnostic testing, they differ from clinical laboratories in that the scope of their work, including their patient diagnostic testing, revolves around the prevention and control of communicable disease, community surveillance of infectious or communicable disease, and promoting and maintaining public health.

Unfortunately, SB 744 would add thousands of dollars in annual fees to the San Bernardino County Public Health Lab for state registration of the lab and its 10 professional staff positions. The County's lab already pays a comparable amount of federal lab registration fees to CMS. At this time, Public Health lab professionals pay no fees.

Public health laboratories are an extension of the state's authority to protect public health, are non-profit governmental entities, and have a different function and mission than the clinical laboratories addressed by this bill. While we appreciate the interest you have taken in this matter, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors joins the County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC), the Health Officers Association of California (HOAC) and the California Association of Public Health Laboratory Directors (CAPHLD) in opposing SB 744 unless amended to remove all mention of Public Health Laboratories. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lance Larson, the County's Director of Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821. The Board thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

**GARY C. OVITT**  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

*The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.*